

Leading To No Trump Contracts

<div><div><div>♠A43</div><div>♥A109</div><div>♦Q64</div><div>♣K652</div></div><div><div>♠J105</div><div>♥Q62</div><div>♦J1098</div><div>♣743</div></div><div><div>♠9876</div><div>♥J543</div><div>♦K72</div><div>♣AQ</div></div><div><div>♠KQ2</div><div>♥K87</div><div>♦A53</div><div>♣J1098</div></div></div> <div><div>Board 1 : Dealer North : Love all</div><div><div><div>West</div><div>North</div><div>East</div><div>South</div></div><div><div></div><div>1NT</div><div>Pass</div><div>3NT</div></div></div><div>All Pass</div><div>Leading away from an unsupported knave is not too attractive - you need partner to hold a lot of high cards in the suit to make it work and you are far more likely to open up a frozen suit. That's what happens here on the lead of a low heart (and only a 4carder too). The best lead is a passive ♠8 (second highest from bad holdings). Declarer has only eight tricks and this start should prevent him from making a game-getting ninth trick.</div></div>
<div><div><div>♠J1094</div><div>♥1087</div><div>♦A86</div><div>♣743</div></div><div><div>♠852</div><div>♥AKQ</div><div>♦KQJ10</div><div>♣J109</div></div><div><div>♠K3</div><div>♥J432</div><div>♦753</div><div>♣AKQ2</div></div><div><div>♠AQ76</div><div>♥965</div><div>♦942</div><div>♣865</div></div></div> <div><div>Board 2 : Dealer East : NS vulnerable</div><div><div><div>West</div><div>North</div><div>East</div><div>South</div></div><div><div></div><div></div><div>1NT</div><div>Pass</div></div></div><div>3NTAll Pass</div><div>It would not be silly for South to lead a spade but, as you see, that presents declarer with a ninth trick. If South leads passively (any other suit) North will gain the lead with ♦A. North will see that the best chance is to switch to a spade (it's more attractive than a club switch given North's useful sequence of spade cards). Underleading honours is far more attractive with a 5card suit than with South's actual 4card suit.</div></div>
<div><div><div>♠Q763</div><div>♥Q5</div><div>♦87</div><div>♣KQ1083</div></div><div><div>♠J54</div><div>♥974</div><div>♦Q643</div><div>♣974</div></div><div><div>♠K982</div><div>♥KJ1032</div><div>♦J9</div><div>♣A5</div></div><div><div>♠A10</div><div>♥A86</div><div>♦AK1052</div><div>♣J62</div></div></div> <div><div>Board 3 : Dealer South : EW vulnerable</div><div><div><div>West</div><div>North</div><div>East</div><div>South</div></div><div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div>1♦</div></div><div><div>Pass</div><div>1♠</div><div>Pass</div><div>1NT</div></div><div><div>Pass</div><div>3NT</div><div>All Pass</div><div></div></div></div><div>West has a choice between identical holdings in clubs and hearts. East didn't have the opportunity to overcall either clubs or hearts at the one level so it seems a guess. The only clue is that North/South might have made a greater effort to find a heart fit if either of them held four, so that sways it in favour of leading ♥7. All things being equal, an unbid major is preferred and the heart lead ensures four heart and one club winners for the defence.</div></div>

<div>♠ 754 ♥ 53 ♦ J764 ♣ KJ32</div> <div>♠ 832 ♠ A106 ♥ A1084 ♥ KQ9 ♦ A9 ♦ K1053 ♣ AQ109 ♣ 754 ♠ KQJ9 ♥ J762 ♦ Q82 ♣ 86</div>	<div>Board 4 : Dealer West : All vulnerable</div> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>2NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>3NT</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> <div>Listen to the bidding. The opponents clearly have nothing to spare for their game. North should aim to give nothing away. If he decides on a passive lead, prefer the longer holding (spades over hearts). You will see that either minor gives a trick away, while a heart lead picks up ♥J for declarer. As it happens a spade lead strikes gold, but the important thing initially is that it gives nothing away.</div>	West	North	East	South	1NT	Pass	2NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass		
West	North	East	South										
1NT	Pass	2NT	Pass										
3NT	All Pass												
<div>♠ Q107 ♥ AK8 ♦ K53 ♣ 6532</div> <div>♠ K98 ♠ A5432 ♥ QJ102 ♥ 943 ♦ 108 ♦ 7642 ♣ A987 ♣ 4 ♠ J6 ♥ 765 ♦ AQJ9 ♣ KQJ10</div>	<div>Board 5 : Dealer North : NS vulnerable</div> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>3NT</td></tr></table> <div>All Pass</div> <div>You should never underlead a side suit ace at trick one <i>against a suit contract</i>, but that certainly doesn't apply against no trumps. A lead of ♠3 is attractive here. Partner wins trick one with ♠K and returns ♠9 (the top card from the remaining doubleton). East allows declarer to win this, following suit with ♠2 to show he started with a 5card suit. When West wins ♣A, another spade return allows the suit to run.</div>	West	North	East	South		1NT	Pass	3NT				
West	North	East	South										
	1NT	Pass	3NT										
<div>♠ 10982 ♥ 10762 ♦ 83 ♣ 986</div> <div>♠ AK6 ♠ QJ3 ♥ AKQ ♥ J984 ♦ KQ5 ♦ A1092 ♣ 10754 ♣ AQ ♠ 754 ♥ 53 ♦ J764 ♣ KJ32</div>	<div>Board 6 : Dealer East : EW vulnerable</div> <table><tr><th>West</th><th>North</th><th>East</th><th>South</th></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td></tr><tr><td>6NT</td><td>All Pass</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> <div>Neither declarer or dummy has suggested long suits. Declarer may well have to play all 4 suits himself to come to 12 tricks, so South shouldn't present him with a gift by leading away from honours in the minor suits. The spade suit lead (South's longer major) is as safe as anything. Declarer can succeed (dubiously running ♦10) but in practice he is likely to fail.</div>	West	North	East	South			1NT	Pass	6NT	All Pass		
West	North	East	South										
		1NT	Pass										
6NT	All Pass												

<div><div><div>♠ 852</div><div>♥ AKQ</div><div>♦ KQJ10</div><div>♣ J109</div></div><div><div>♠ AQ763</div><div>♥ 96</div><div>♦ 942</div><div>♣ 865</div></div><div><div>♠ 104</div><div>♥ 108752</div><div>♦ A86</div><div>♣ 743</div></div><div><div>♠ KJ9</div><div>♥ J43</div><div>♦ 753</div><div>♣ AKQ2</div></div></div>	<div>Board 7 : Dealer South : All vulnerable</div> <table><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr><tr><td>Pass</td><td>3NT</td><td>All Pass</td><td>1NT</td></tr></table> <p>With a 5card spade suit a spade lead is obvious - ♠6 (fourth best from a broken suit). Declarer wins cheaply but East gains the lead with ♦A and a spade return sets up five tricks for the defenders.</p> <p>This hand again demonstrates the power of underleading an ace against a no trump contract. In order to get four winners going we're prepared to give declarer one easy trick. On any other lead than a spade we don't have the time to set up sufficient winners to beat the contract.</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	Pass	3NT	All Pass	1NT
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>						
Pass	3NT	All Pass	1NT						
<div><div><div>♠ J5432</div><div>♥ 943</div><div>♦ 76</div><div>♣ AK6</div></div><div><div>♠ K76</div><div>♥ AK8</div><div>♦ K53</div><div>♣ 8543</div></div><div><div>♠ A9</div><div>♥ 765</div><div>♦ AQ98</div><div>♣ QJ109</div></div><div><div>♠ Q108</div><div>♥ QJ102</div><div>♦ J1042</div><div>♣ 72</div></div></div>	<div>Board 8 : Dealer West : Love all</div> <table><tr><th><i>West</i></th><th><i>North</i></th><th><i>East</i></th><th><i>South</i></th></tr><tr><td>1NT</td><td>Pass</td><td>3NT</td><td>All Pass</td></tr></table> <p>Leading from a poor 5card suit <i>can</i> work well if we have side suit entries. Here North has two potential entries to set up spade winners. This makes the fourth best lead of ♠3 quite appealing. The defence can set up and enjoy three spade tricks before declarer can establish clubs.</p>	<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass
<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>						
1NT	Pass	3NT	All Pass						